ZERO MAHOU
SCANLATIONS PRESENTS

ZERO KARA HAJIMERU MAHOU NO SHO CHAPTER 4

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RHYMES WITH MELODY

SPECIAL THANKS TO VULGRIM FOR THE RAWS!

CHAPTER 4

THAT'S RE-ASSUR-IN'.
EVEN IF ANY DO TRY, FEAR NOT.
I WILL BE HERE TO SAFE-GUARD YOU.

A WITCH WOULD NEVER LAY A FINGER ON THE POS-ESS-IONS OF ANO-THER.
SO LONG AS IT IS MADE CLEAR THAT YOU ARE MY MAN-SERVANT, NO WITCHES WILL TRY TO TAKE YOUR HEAD.
EASY FER YOU TA SAY ...
BUT I'M STILL NOT TOO FOND OF THE IDEA OF BEING CHASED BY A CROWD OF WITCHES TRYIN' TA LOB MY HEAD OFF.

I CAN TELL YOU DON'T REALLY THINK SO.

DO YOU THINK I'M LYING ABOUT KEEPING YOU SAFE?
WELL DO YA THINK I C'N JUST TAKE YER WORDS AS TRUTH?
HMM...
TRUSTING ANOTHER TO WATCH YOUR BACK WOULD MAKE YOU RELIANT UPON OTHERS AND ENGENDER CARELESSNESS.
IT WOULD BE ASKING FOR DEATH.
THIS IS WHY I AM NOT ASKING FOR YOUR TRUST.
I WILL PROTECT YOU OF MY OWN VOLITION.

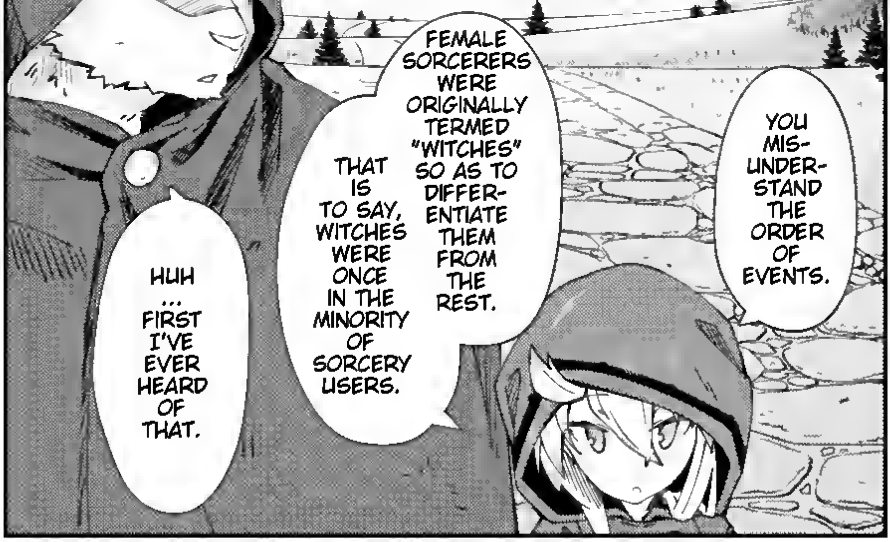
YOU ARE NE-CESS-ARY TO ME.
THAT'S ...
... RE-ASSUR-IN'.
WHAT ABOUT YOU, WILL YOU BE AL-RIGHT?
Ah
?
NO MATTER HOW MANY TIMES YA TELL US YER A POWER-FUL WITCH,
THE FACT IS, WE'RE FACIN' A GROUP 'F WITCHES WHO'VE LEARNED MAGIC FROM THE BOOK OF ZERO.
They could beat you at your own game.

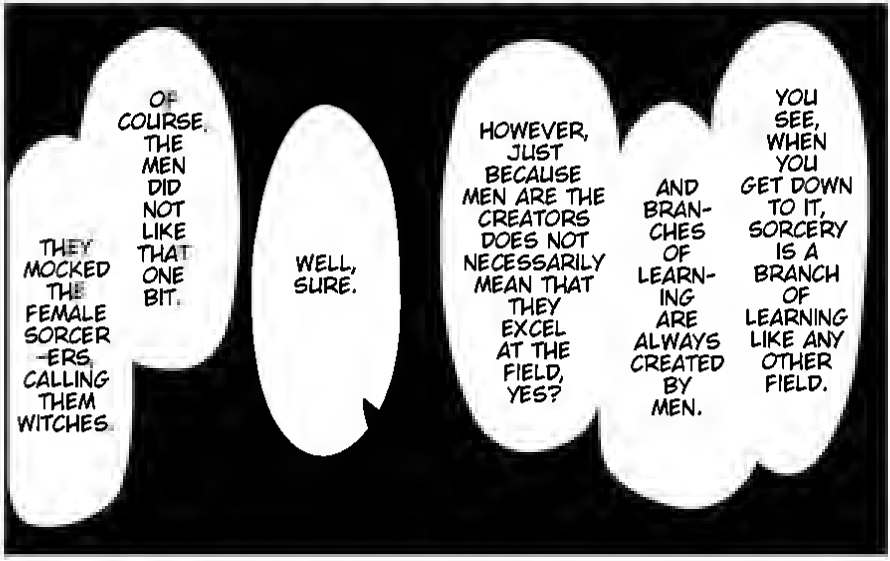
HMM ...
ARE YOU PERHAPS CONCERNED FOR ME?
YA WANT ME TO EXPLAIN WHY?
IT'S BECAUSE YOU LOVE ME, YES?~

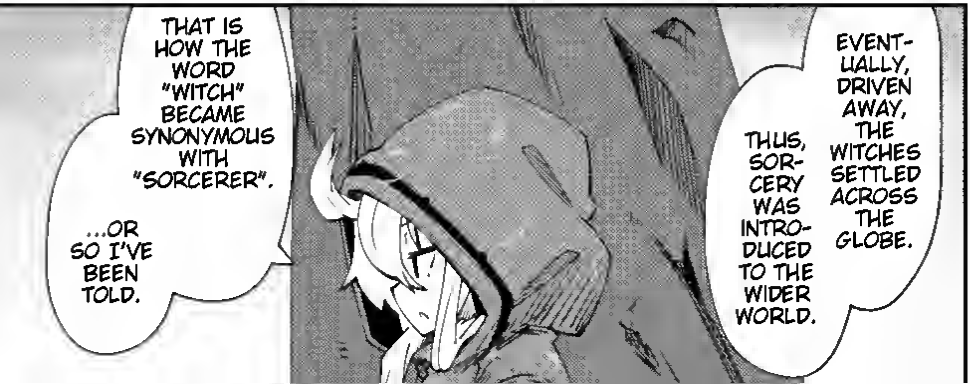
IF YOU ARE WORRIED THAT I WILL DIE WITHOUT FULFILLING MY END OF OUR AGREEMENT, THEN WORRY NOT.
THERE IS NOT EVEN A ONE-IN-A-MILLION CHANCE THAT I WILL BE DEFEATED.
AND EVEN IF I ALONE AM NOT SUFFICIENT, THIRTEENTH'S POWER IS A FORCE TO WHICH THE MASSES OF PHONY WITCHES CANNOT HOLD A CANDLE.
THIR-TEENTH, EH?

HELL NO !!!

IT'S OBVIOUS THAT THEY SHARE A BOND.
SURE, THEY STUDIED TOGETHER,
BUT ZERO SEEMS AWFULLY TRUSTING OF HIM.
WHAT KIND OF BOND, EXACTLY, IS BEYOND ME, BUT...
UM... SAY, IF THERE'RE MEN WHO CAN USE SORCERY, WHY'RE THEY CALLED WITCHES TOO?
WAIT, WHAT AM I THINKING?
THERE ISN'T ANYTHING WRONG WITH THAT.


YOU MIS-UNDER-STAND THE ORDER OF EVENTS.
FEMALE SORCERERS WERE ORIGINALLY TERMED "WITCHES" SO AS TO DIFFER-ENTIATE THEM FROM THE REST.
THAT IS TO SAY, WITCHES WERE ONCE IN THE MINORITY OF SORCERY USERS.
HUH ... FIRST I'VE EVER HEARD OF THAT.


YOU SEE, WHEN YOU GET DOWN TO IT, SORCERY IS A BRANCH OF LEARNING LIKE ANY OTHER FIELD.
AND BRAN-CHES OF LEARN-ING ARE ALWAYS CREATED BY MEN.
HOWEVER, JUST BECAUSE MEN ARE THE CREATORS DOES NOT NECESSARILY MEAN THAT THEY EXCEL AT THE FIELD, YES?
WELL, SURE.
OF COURSE, THE MEN DID NOT LIKE THAT ONE BIT.
THEY MOCKED THE FEMALE SORCER-ERS, CALLING THEM WITCHES.

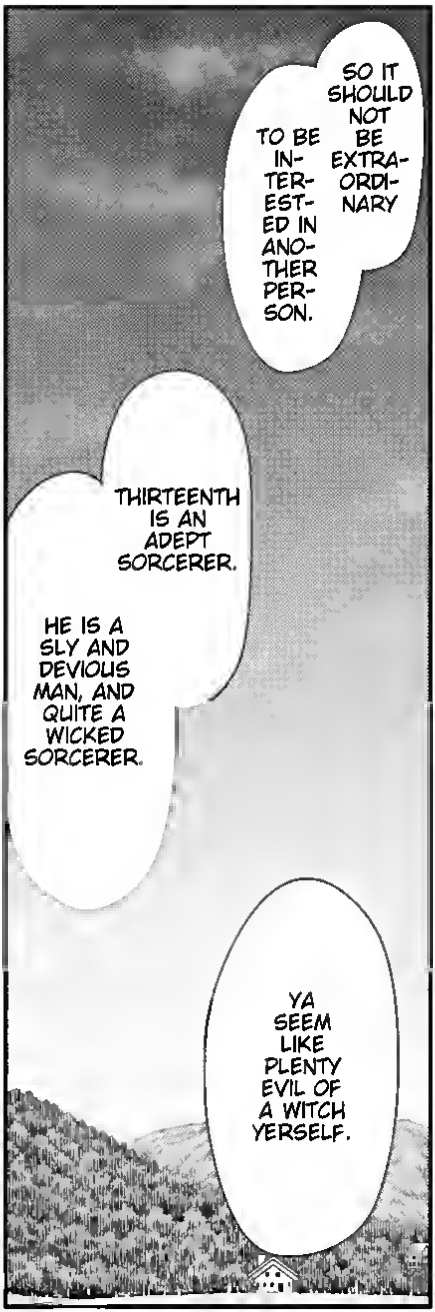

EVENT-UALLY, DRIVEN AWAY, THE WITCHES SETTLED ACROSS THE GLOBE.
THUS, SOR-CERY WAS INTRO-DUCED TO THE WIDER WORLD.
THAT IS HOW THE WORD "WITCH" BECAME SYNONYMOUS WITH "SORCERER".
...OR SO I'VE BEEN TOLD.

NOWADAYS WITCHES ARE THE MAJORITY, ALTHOUGH MALE SORCERERS CERTAINLY EXIST.
AND SOMETIMES, SOME OF THEM EXHIBIT DREADFUL POWER.
...LIKE THIRTEENTH?
YEAH.

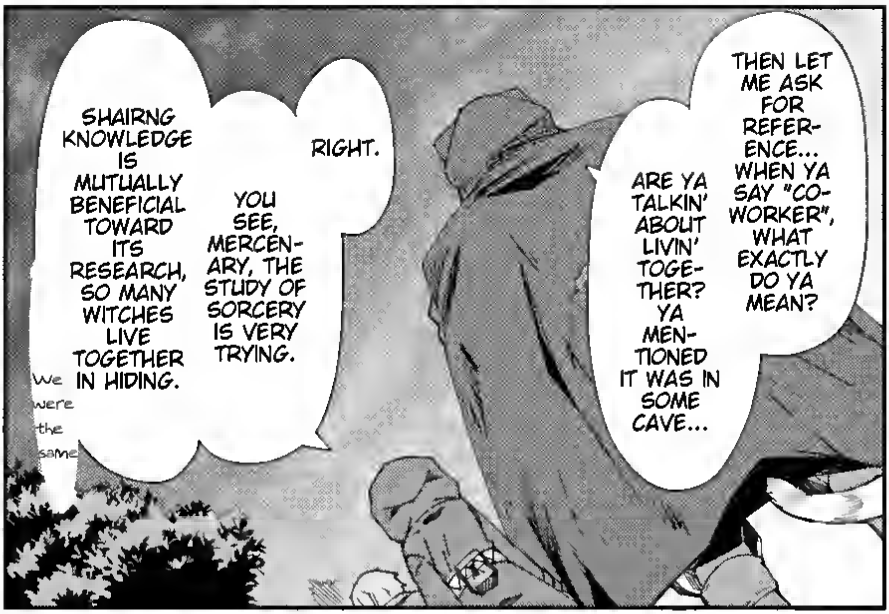
IS SOMETHING WRONG, MERCENARY? COULD YOU BE JEALOUS?
DON'T FLATTER YOURSELF.
I JUST FEEL LIKE THROWIN' UP FROM HOW FOND YA SOUND, IS ALL.
wha...

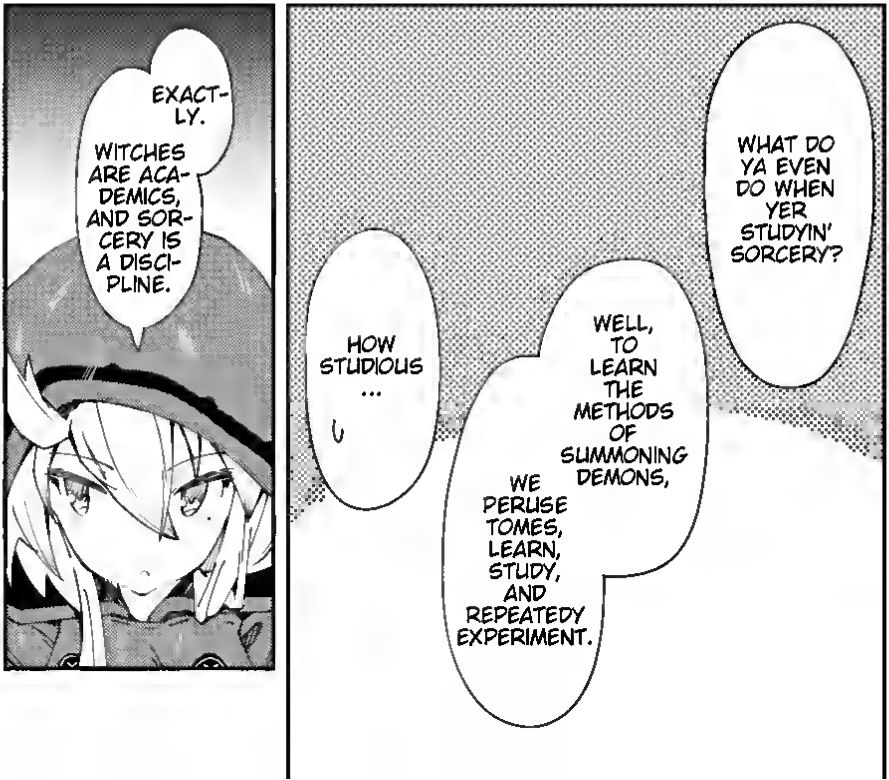
IF YOU HEAR FONDNESS IN MY VOICE, THEN YOU MUST BE JEALOUS.
I SIMPLY SPEAK OF A MAN CAPABLE OF BEING MY COWORKER.
YOUR "COWORKER" 'N MINE MIGHT NOT MEAN THE SAME THING AT ALL, ME BEIN' A MERCENARY.

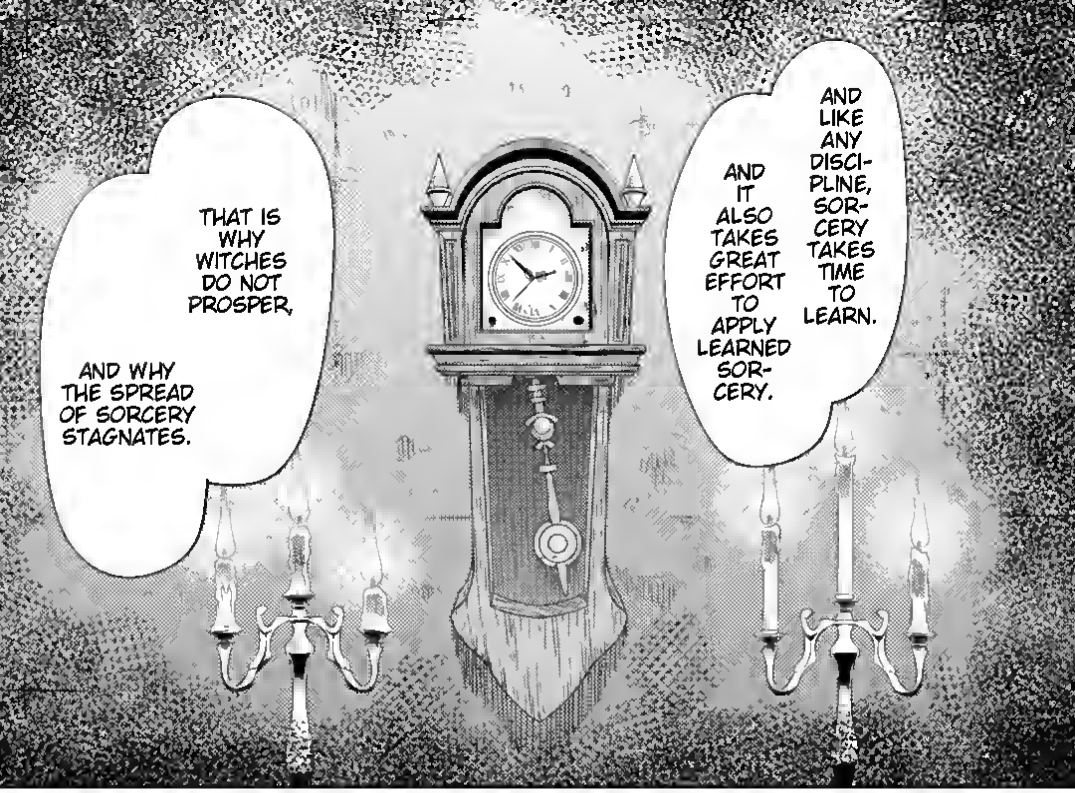
CAN YA REALLY TRUST SOMEONE LIKE THAT...?
YOU WILL KNOW WHEN YOU MEET HIM, BUT EVEN I AM NOTHING BEFORE HIM.
HE IS NOT MY EQUAL.


SO IT SHOULD NOT BE EXTRA-ORDI-NARY TO BE IN-TER-EST-ED IN ANO-THER PER-SON.
THIRTEENTH IS AN ADEPT SORCERER.
HE IS A SLY AND DEVIOUS MAN, AND QUITE A WICKED SORCERER.
YA SEEM LIKE PLENTY EVIL OF A WITCH YERSELF.

I WOULD NOT SAY SO. HE IS AN ADEPT SORCERER,
BUT HE IS THE EMBODIMENT OF UTILITARIANISM AND EGOISM.
Not unlike a demon.


THEN LET ME ASK FOR REFERENCE... WHEN YA SAY "COWORKER", WHAT EXACTLY DO YA MEAN?
ARE YA TALKIN' ABOUT LIVIN' TOGETHER? YA MENTIONED IT WAS IN SOME CAVE...
RIGHT.
YOU SEE, MERCENARY, THE STUDY OF SORCERY IS VERY TRYING.
SHAIRNG KNOWLEDGE IS MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL TOWARD ITS RESEARCH, SO MANY WITCHES LIVE TOGETHER IN HIDING.
We were the same


WHAT DO YA EVEN DO WHEN YER STUDYIN' SORCERY?
WELL, TO LEARN THE METHODS OF SUMMONING DEMONS,
WE PERUSE TOMES, LEARN, STUDY, AND REPEATEDY EXPERIMENT.
HOW STUDIOUS ...
EXACTLY. WITCHES ARE ACADEMICS, AND SORCERY IS A DISCIPLINE.


AND LIKE ANY DISCI-PLINE, SOR-CERY TAKES TIME TO LEARN.
AND IT ALSO TAKES GREAT EFFORT TO APPLY LEARNED SOR-CERY.
THAT IS WHY WITCHES DO NOT PROSPER,
AND WHY THE SPREAD OF SORCERY STAGNATES.

AND THAT IS WHY...
WE WITCH-ES WERE DE-FEATED BY THE CHUR-CH.

AH... THAT MAY BE POSSIBLE ...
BUT IT WOULD BE SUCH A TROUBLESOME ORDEAL THAT I HAVE NEVER EVEN GIVEN ANY THOUGHT TO IT...
HM?
BUT YA HAVE MAGIC NOW.
CAN'T YA WIN NOW? ...AGAINST THE CHURCH, I MEAN.
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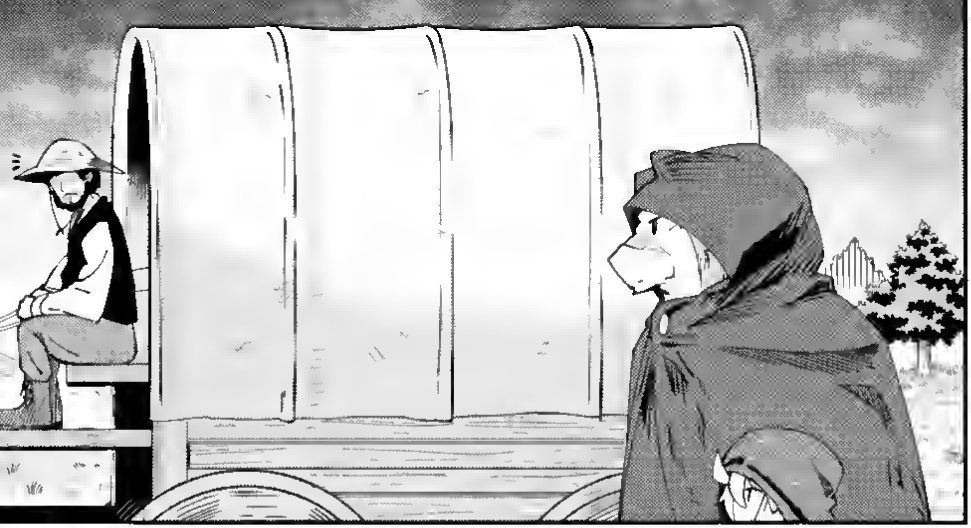

AH, I THOUGHT SO ...
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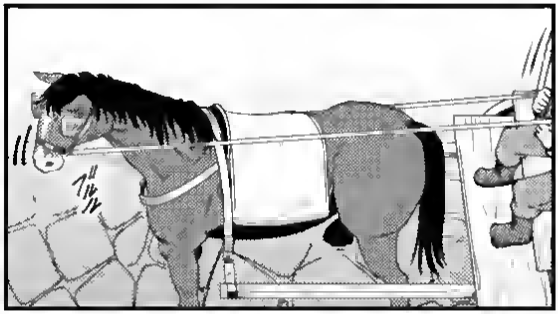
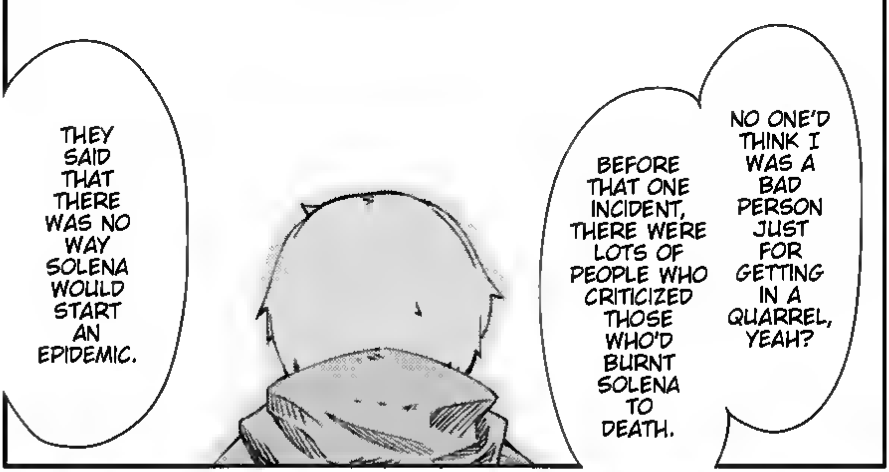


LADDIE, YOU'RE A FALLEN BEAST, AREN'TCHA?
HERE TO HELP WITH THE WITCH HUNTS?
Quite a noble cause

BACK IN THE OLD DAYS, WE WERE ON GOOD TERMS WI' THEM WITCHES. EVEN 'ROUND THE TIME I WAS BORN.
I HEARD THAT MY GRAND-PAPPY WENT TO SOLENA FOR MEDICINE ONCE.
Seems I'd gotten a real bad fever
IT'S LIKE A FAIRY TALE THAT ACTUALLY HAPPENED.
...DIDN'T THEY BURN THAT WITCH AT THE STAKE FOR CAUSIN' AN EPIDEMIC?
SAY- AIN'T THERE A CHANCE THAT SOLENA USED SORCERY TA CURE THE PLAGUE?
THERE IS.
--WAS, BUT NOT ANY-MORE.
WHADDAYA MEAN??


NO ONE'D THINK I WAS A BAD PERSON JUST FOR GETTING IN A QUARREL, YEAH?
BEFORE THAT ONE INCIDENT, THERE WERE LOTS OF PEOPLE WHO CRITICIZED THOSE WHO'D BURNT SOLENA TO DEATH.
THEY SAID THAT THERE WAS NO WAY SOLENA WOULD START AN EPIDEMIC.

BUT AFTER THE WITCHES BURNT THAT VILLAGE TO A CRISP, EVERYONE STARTED TO SUPPORT THE WITCH HUNTS ...
...MYSELF INCLUDED.

BUT EVERYONE'S GROWN WEARY OF IT ALL. WE DON'T WANT IT TO GO ON ANY LONGER... BUT WE DON'T WANT TO LOSE.
SO WE'RE STILL HOLDING OUT HOPE.

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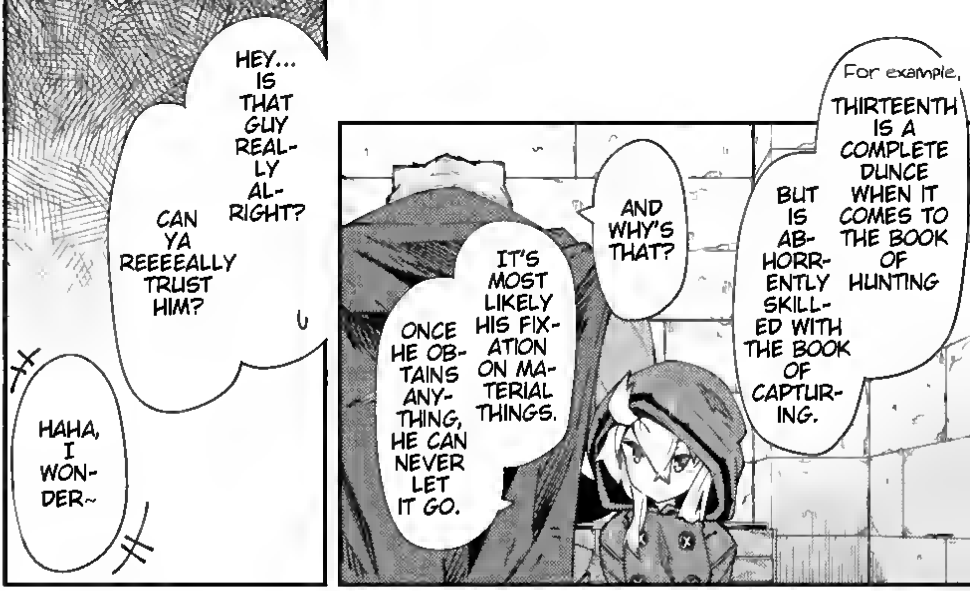
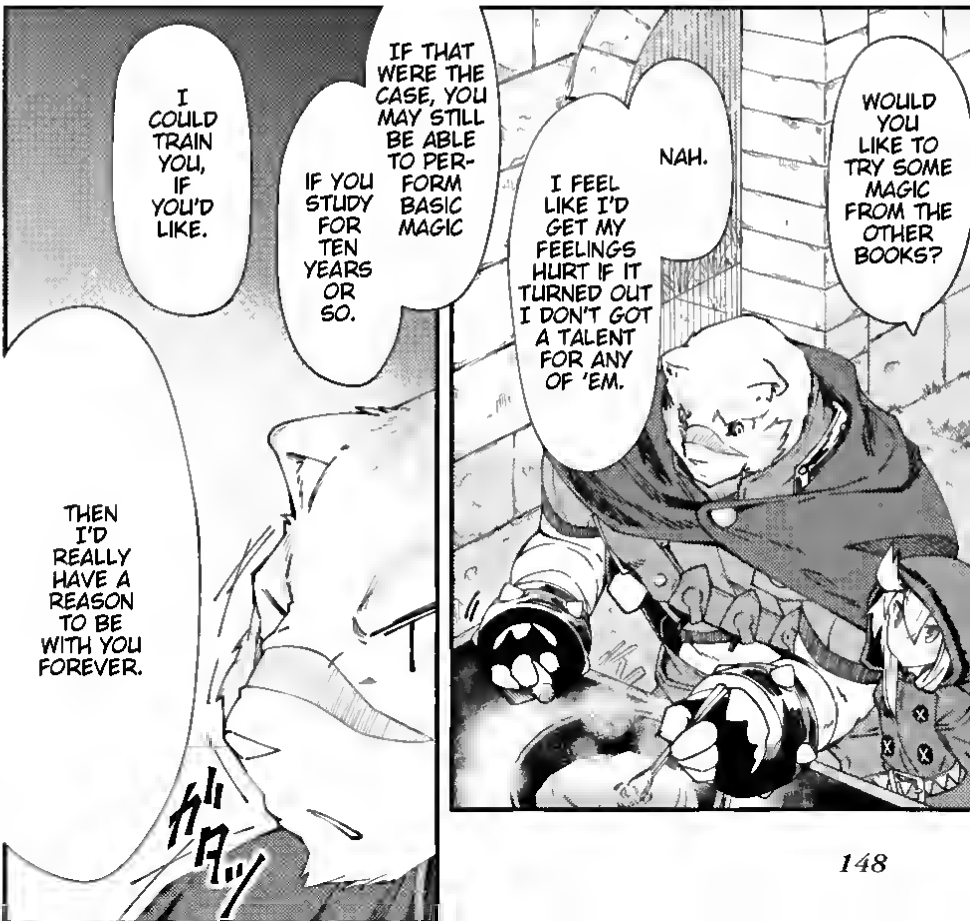
HEY, THINK YA COULD TEACH ME THAT? "LEKS", I THINK IT WAS?
I DOUBT YOU COULD USE IT.
NO-THING HAPPENED WHEN YOU RECITED THE SPELL EARLIER, REMEMBER?
You lack talent for the Book of Hunting.
It'd be nice for camping.

AS I SAID, THE GRIM-OIRE IS COM-POSED OF FOUR VOL-UMES.
BUT EVEN BET-WEEN THEM ONE'S APTI-TUDE CAN VARY WILDLY.
THE FORTI-TUDE OF YOUR THOUGHTS AND THEIR ALIGN-MENT ...
THAT SORT OF THING.

WHAT DETERMINES WHETHER YA HAVE TALENT FOR MAGIC, ANYHOW?
HOW MUCH KARMA ONE HAS ACCUMU-LATED, I WOULD THINK.


HEY... IS THAT GUY REALLY ALRIGHT?
CAN YA REEEEALLY TRUST HIM?
HAHA, I WONDER~
For example,
THIRTEENTH IS A COMPLETE DUNCE WHEN IT COMES TO THE BOOK OF HUNTING
BUT IS ABHORRENTLY SKILLED WITH THE BOOK OF CAPTURING.
AND WHY'S THAT?
IT'S MOST LIKELY HIS FIXATION ON MATERIAL THINGS.
ONCE HE OBTAINS ANYTHING, HE CAN NEVER LET IT GO.


WOULD YOU LIKE TO TRY SOME MAGIC FROM THE OTHER BOOKS?
NAH.
I FEEL LIKE I'D GET MY FEELINGS HURT IF IT TURNED OUT I DON'T GOT A TALENT FOR ANY OF 'EM.
IF THAT WERE THE CASE, YOU MAY STILL BE ABLE TO PERFORM BASIC MAGIC
IF YOU STUDY FOR TEN YEARS OR SO.
I COULD TRAIN YOU, IF YOU'D LIKE.
THEN I'D REALLY HAVE A REASON TO BE WITH YOU FOREVER.
ガリ...

H-HEY ...
IT-- IT SOUNDS LIKE YOU REALLY WANT TO STAY WITH ME FOREVER ...
THAT'S WHAT I SAID, WASN'T IT?
I FIND IT FUN TO BE WITH YOU.
Hm?
MER-CEN-ARY, IS SOME-THING WRONG?

THANKS FOR THE MEAL.
...I'M GONNA GET SOME FRESH AIR.
シャカ
HEY... WHAT DO YA REALLY THINK?
DID SOLENA ...
REALLY CAUSE THAT PLAGUE?

ONLY 'CAUSE THERE'S NO ONE ELSE TA ASK.
YOU'RE ASKING A WITCH LIKE MYSELF?

IF YER TELLIN' ME TO SHUT UP, THEN I'LL SHUT UP.
THAT MEANS
THAT YOU'LL BE ASKING ME LOTS OF THINGS FROM NOW ON, NO?

I'M NOT.

I AM HAPPY, MERCENARY.
I CANNOT HELP BUT BE HAPPY WHEN TALKING WITH YOU LIKE THIS.
YOU ASK, AND I ANSWER.
THROUGH THIS,
WE WILL LEARN MORE ABOUT EACH OTHER.

...IF YOU WERE TO HAVE SOMEONE ELSE TO ASK QUESTIONS TO,
I WOULD BE UNBEARABLY LONELY.

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AH~
THEN I SUPPOSE I MUST ANSWER YOU.

HEY, WHAT'S WITH THE SILENCE?
THE QUES-TION.
THE ONE I ASKED YOU JUST THEN.
HM?
HURRY UP AND ANSWER ME.

WHAT MAKES YA SAY THAT?

BECAUSE SHE WOULD HAVE GAINED NOTHING FROM DOING SO.

THE LIKELIHOOD OF SOLENA BEING THE CAUSE OF THE EPIDEMIC IS OVER-WHELM-INGLY LOW.

PLAGUE SORCERY IS AN ELEMENTARY SORT OF SORCERY.
I DON'T KNOW ABOUT NOVICE SORCERERS,
BUT IT IS NOT SOMETHING THAT A WITCH OF THE LUNAR CHANT WOULD RISK BEING HUNTED DOWN TO EXPERIMENT WITH.
...YA MEAN THE SPREADIN' OF THAT PLAGUE WAS AN EXPERIMENT?
IF IT WERE NOT UPON A REQUEST, THEN THAT IS THE MOST LIKELY CASE.
WITCHES WHO INTERACTED WITH NEIGHBORING HUMANS OFTEN RECIEVED BASIC NECESSITIES FOR THEIR DIVINATIONS.
THUS, IF THEIR VILLAGE WAS DECIMATED BY PLAGUE, IT WOULD BE THEIR LOSS.

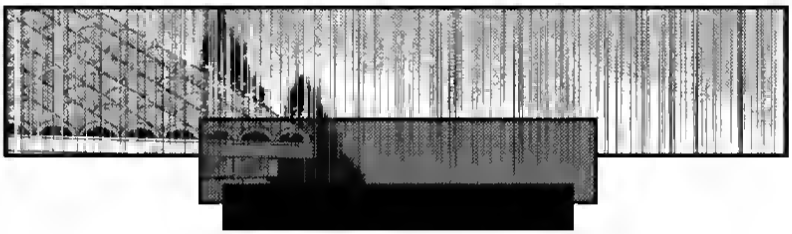
I CANNOT CLAIM THAT ALL WITCHES ARE VIRTUOUS.
WITCHES WILL ALWAYS ACT OUT OF SELF-INTEREST.
THAT IS WHY
THE LIKELI-HOOD THAT A WITCH OF THE LUNAR CHANT WOULD VOLUNTARILY START AN EPIDEMIC IS LOW.

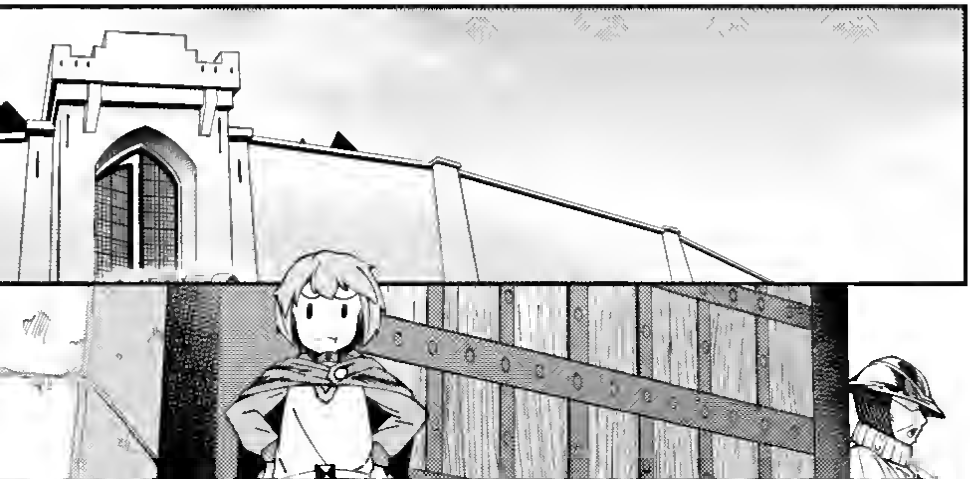
ASSUMING THAT SOLENA HAD BEEN KILLED BY THE RESI-DENTS OF THE VILLAGE SHE AIMED TO SAVE,
IT IS NOT DIFFICULT TO IMAGINE THE SAD-NESS AND ANGER THAT WOULD HAVE ARISEN.
SO OF COURSE, THE WITCHES HAD ARISEN IN A RAGE AND SANK THE VILLAGE INTO A SEA OF FIRE.
--THEN IT WAS THE HUMANS WHO HAD STARTED THE WAR?

--I HAD BEEN PRE-JUDICED.
ACHOO!!
I'D THOUGHT ALL WITCHES WERE EVIL,
AND THAT WE NEEDED TO KILL THEM 'TIL THERE WERE NONE LEFT.
EVEN AMONG WITCHES THERE IS DIVERSITY, MERCENARY.
THERE ARE THOSE WHO MEAN HARM, AND THOSE WHO WORK FOR THE GREATER GOOD.

...
SORRY, ALBUS.
FOR INSULTIN' SOLENA BY SAYIN' SHE'D SPREAD THE PLAGUE.
WELL, IDIOTS MIS-UNDER-STAND THINGS ALL THE TIME, YEAH?
I'M NOT ONE TO HOLD A GRUDGE, SO I'LL LET YOU OFF THE HOOK!

JUST MAKE SURE TO THINK LONGER BEFORE YOU SPEAK NEXT TIME, OKAY?





HURRY UP!
THE GATE'S GONNA CLOSE ON US!!
TO BE CONTINUED IN VOLUME 2